

Your turn: Make a Digital Self-Portrait

Digitally manipulating a photograph is a great way to create a unique and expressive self-portrait. In this activity, you will start with a photo of yourself and then use imaging software to apply special effects and alterations. Then, you'll write a personal poem to complement your picture.

See http://www.nga.gov/education/classroom/self_portraits/act_warhol.html for some examples of what you can create.

To make your self-portrait, you'll need to download a photograph of yourself into the computer. Here are a couple of different ways:

1. If you are using a traditional photograph, you can scan it and save it as a file in your computer, or you can have the photo store where you have your film developed put your photos onto a computer disk.
2. If you have a digital camera, you can transfer your photos directly into the computer.

Once you have your photo entered into the computer, use digital-imaging software such as Adobe Photoshop (or Adobe Photoshop Elements), Jasc Paint Shop Pro, Corel Painter, or other editor to apply special effects to your picture. Start with the crop tool to eliminate any areas of your photo that you don't want to keep. Play with the size and rotation of your image. Experiment with paint tools, filters, color levels, and any other editing tools available. You could even add text and original graphics to your picture, or copy and paste multiple images of yourself!

As you manipulate your digital image, consider what you want to communicate about yourself. What will the viewer who examines your self-portrait learn about you? What information will your personal poem add to your self-portrait? Try creating two or three different variations of your picture.

When you're finished, print your picture(s). Choose one picture and write a poem to describe in words what you have tried to express in your digital self-portrait. Place both in your self-portrait portfolio.